

Donna Koser

Plymouth, CT

Dear State Department of Ed Appropriations Hearing Members,

Today, as you discuss the future of the Parent Trust Fund, I ask that you continue supporting this item in our state budget. I am the proud graduate of three of the programs funded through the Parent Trust Fund; People Empowering People (PEP), Parents Supporting Educational Excellence (Parents SEE) and the Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI). In addition to being a graduate, I was privileged to coordinate two of the programs; connecting to each participant and witnessing the change occurred through their journey in these programs. Each year, I am amazed to see the growth of the individuals and their desire to make a difference. The give back of these programs is unmeasurable in their respective community as each graduate follows their passion and desire to make Connecticut a better place. In Plymouth alone, we have had projects implemented such as, community gardens, yearly food drives, fundraisers, and more, that have had a great impact in the community; just one small piece of our great state of Connecticut. Across Connecticut these programs empower participants to get involved at the local and state level. In Plymouth, we have had many graduates who ran for and secured elected positions and others who serve on a variety of committees. With a decline in voter participation since the 1960's we need more citizens to understand that their voice matters and participates in the process to help move Connecticut forward.

Thank you in advance for ensuring the liberties of our children and the parents who are able to participate through the Parent Trust Fund remains strong in our state. Our children deserve more parent leaders who will ensure their future is bright.

Best,

Donna Koser

Parent Leader